

THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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FEBRUARY 27, 1927

The Car on the Beach

By Ruth Kathryn Gaylord

ETHEL was thankful that her cousins were there when Father and Mother drove off to the lawyer's, ten miles away.

"I feel," she told Dick, "as though any minute someone might come marching on the steps and knock loudly on the door, as much as to say: 'Did you think this was your house? Well, it isn't; it's mine!'"

Nick tried to be comforting. "The lawyer'll fix things. Lawyers can do anything."

"Almost anything," Dick corrected. Ethel could see that he felt doubtful. "Tell me again," he commanded, "what the letter said, and what your father's going to do."

So, as well as she could, Ethel explained. There had been a little mistake years ago about taxes. Now someone said — a Mr. Stoddard Hampton and associates from up north — that all the land around here belonged by rights to them. They were going to lay out a large subdivision.

"And they're going to lay it right through our land!" Ethel said gloomily. "Then we'll have to rent an apartment in some city — maybe Daytona — and Father'll get a bookkeeping job like the one he used to have before we came to Florida."

Dick spoke then. "I thought the doctor said," he began, "that Uncle Harry ought to stay out-of-doors."

Ethel nodded. "He did say so, but —"

"It's a shame," Nick interrupted. "If I was a lawyer, I — I'd arrest Mr. Stoddard Hampton and associates!"

The little porch where they sat faced directly on the beach. Father had built his bungalow so it seemed to snuggle down among the sand-dunes. Ethel loved them in spite of the coarse grass which always grew in tufts and the wild yucca which thrust its "Spanish bayonets" out to stab a person who wasn't careful.

She loved the long, long stretch of ocean, but most of all she loved the beach — Dune Beach, Father had christened it, because when he bought there it possessed no name.

Twenty miles further north, this same beach grew into a much more famous one, where fast automobiles raced along the hard-packed sand, and where rows of millionaires' houses stood.

But on Dune Beach there were only the little brown sandpipers that darted about all day, running close to the edge of the water and making reflections of themselves on the wet sand. Once in a while Ethel saw heron, standing with ridiculous dignity, each on one leg. That was

when she rode her pony, Star Eyes, miles and miles along the beach.

Today, the boys had come on their bicycles for a picnic. So Ethel said, "We might as well picnic — even if it is our last one."

"I don't believe that it is!" Dick cried.

"I won't believe it!" Nick echoed.

"Where's your pony? Let's start."

"Where's the lunch?" Ethel inquired.

"That's more important. We'll have to fix it ourselves. I'll make the sandwiches. Boys never cut bread straight and they spread on too much jelly or butter!"

It was nearly noon before they started, because they waited for the tide. At high tide, Dune Beach was very narrow — only a strip of dry, loose sand into which one's feet sank deeply and made walking hard. Then, as the tide changed, the line of hard, damp sand which the waves had left would grow wider and wider. When it was low, twenty cars could have driven side by side.

Only at lowest tide were their favorite picnic grounds in sight. There was a spot so far out that to reach it they waded through pools of water left stranded in hollows here and there.

Today, the boys left their bicycles up on the beach, and sat down to pull off their shoes and stockings. Star Eyes, however, carried his mistress straight through the shallows, lifting his hoofs daintily and tossing his mane, as though he liked the touch of the cool, salt water.

Picnic Point lay already high and dry. Ethel slid to the ground and began to spread out the lunch. The boys, now barefoot, were splashing their way out to join her.

She saw Nick stop suddenly, bend down, and run his hand over the sand. "What'd you find?" she called.

"Coquinas!"

Swiftly, Ethel glanced around. She had not noticed them. Now she saw that here and there the receding waves had left thick patches of the tiny shells. Where the sun had dried them, they were paler, but close to the water's edge they glistened, shining and wet, in the softest colors of the rainbow — lavender and rosy shades with dull yellow and smoky blue.

Coquinas are always a matter of chance.

Five O'clock Tea

By
Isadore Elizabeth Flanders

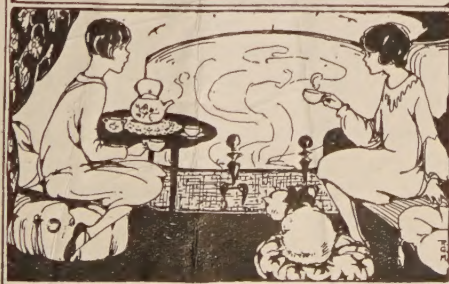
I know a room all rose and light
With chintzes delicate bedight;
The walls are gray in lovely tone.
Come in and make yourself at home.

The long, low settle pillowed gay
Is just the nicest place to stay;
While pussy-cat on satin puff
Lies lazily curled, all silken fluff.

A pie-crust table within reach,
Four cups and saucers, one for each,
Lightly delicate, full of grace,
Artfully placed on cloth of lace.

Dresden teapot, muffled cozy,
Fragile, dainty, blushing rosy.
"Another cup of fragrant tea?"
"With sugar lumps, perhaps full three."

Buttered muffins and jelly red,
Delicious chatter! What's not said?
Soft shadows lengthen in the room,
The pretty hour flies but too soon.



One can never expect to find them, and they must be gathered fresh and broth made from them immediately. At best, they keep only a few hours.

Nick said, "They make me think of the Bible manna. If we try to be greedy and gather an extra supply, the things always spoil."

Therefore, on days when coquinas appear, every menu is swiftly changed and households feast on the delicate broth.

"We'll have them tonight," Ethel decided, "to surprise Father and Mother. I'll ride back to the house and get some pails. Star Eyes can take me home in ten minutes."

She was mounting already. A second later, she turned the pony's head and urged him away up the beach.

As she rode an unhappy thought reminded her: "This may be your last — or almost your last — ride on Dune Beach."

She tried to forget that possibility, but it tuned itself jerkily to the thud of Star Eyes' hoofs on the hard sand: "Your last ride — or almost your last — almost your last —"

Suddenly, far ahead of her, a dark speck showed on the wide expanse of sand. Ethel shaded her eyes, but still she could not quite make it out.

"It looks like a car, but Father couldn't get back this soon. There's no one else who —"

In a flash, she remembered "Mr. Stoddard Hampton and associates."

"Oh!" she gasped. "Oh, supposing they've come!"

Star Eyes was bringing her closer to the black speck. There seemed no doubt now; it was a car — a handsome new sedan. She thought at first it must be empty.

"The people have just arrived," she reasoned, "for it wasn't here when we rode down."

As she came opposite, she glanced sideways. To her astonishment, on the rear seat, sat a girl. She was alone and she was eating her lunch. Ethel caught a glimpse of a thermos bottle and of paper napkins. Then she had passed.

Returning with a number of empty pails, she approached the car more slowly. A voice within her suggested, "It must be stupid eating lunch alone like that."

"What do I care?" she retorted. "The girl and the car probably belong to Mr. Stoddard Hampton. I certainly shan't trouble myself about them."

So, deliberately, she rode on past. But Star Eyes had not gone far when his mistress turned him about. They came alongside of the big car again.

"Wouldn't you like," Ethel asked, rather breathlessly, "to — to eat your lunch with my cousins and me down on Picnic Point?"

The stranger stared at her. Then she answered primly, "I couldn't possibly."

"Oh!" gasped Ethel. Her cheeks went very red. "I — I just thought —" She never finished the sentence, but galloped away down Dune Beach.

"What's the matter?" Dick demanded, when he saw her eyes snapping.

"Tell us," commanded Nick.

Ethel told them, and they grew as indignant as she was.

An hour later, having finished their lunch and filled their pails, they started back toward the house. The car still stood where Ethel had seen it.

"We'll go right by," Nick decided.

Dick agreed. "We won't so much as look."

Ethel did look, however, out of the corner of her eye. She saw the girl leaning against the cushions — still alone.

The driver of the car had left it well up on the beach, a long way from the ocean at low tide. In the last hour, though, the water had begun to creep nearer.

Another hour passed. In the house, Nick and Dick, under Ethel's direction, were washing the sand from the shells and then putting them to soak in clean salt water.

As Nick returned after scooping a pailful from the ocean, he remarked, "Those folks better get back and move their car. The tide's coming in fast. It'll reach there before long."

Ethel had seen a car once that had been caught on Daytona Beach. As the incoming waves softened the sand, its wheels had sunk deeper and deeper. Water had washed through its engine. Father had said it would be an expensive job to dig and haul that car out, besides any damage to the machine.

Glancing occasionally out of the window, Ethel thought, "Mr. Stoddard Hampton can afford that expense, I guess. It certainly isn't any of my business if he leaves his car on the beach too near the water."

Another half hour, and then someone screamed. "What's that?" ejaculated Nick.

Ethel guessed in a second. "Why, it must be the girl left in that car. She's probably frightened. I — I didn't think about her being there."

Instantly, all three of them ran toward the beach. They found the big car still safe, although the last wave had come so high as to lap its wheels gently. That must have been when the girl screamed.

Now, when she saw them, she was sitting silent but plainly terrified.

"Where's your father?" demanded Ethel. "Isn't he coming back?"

The girl pointed. "He and — and the surveyors went over there behind the sand-dunes. When he gets dreadfully excited or — or interested in something, Daddy often forgets all about everything else. I suppose —"

"Well," said Dick then, "we'll have to move this car ourselves. See if the

brake's off, will you, Nick? All right. Now take hold of the bumper with me and push. Ethel, you turn the wheel that way."

"It's such a heavy car," said Ethel doubtfully.

Dick answered, "We've pushed Father's out of his garage, and this sand's almost as hard as cement. If you once get it rolling, —"

It worked as he thought. Very slowly at first, then faster, the sedan moved along, headed gradually away from the water.

"There!" said Dick finally. "It'll be safe for a few more minutes, while we locate your father. We'll go and look —"

But no one needed to go. A man appeared suddenly from behind the dunes. "There's my father!" gasped the girl in relief.

"O Daddy," she screamed, "I'd have been washed out to sea, if these boys hadn't pushed the car —"

"No, you wouldn't," Ethel interrupted, "but it wouldn't have been good for the car to get all sandy and wet."

The man glanced at her. "Where do you live around here — in that bungalow there?"

Ethel nodded. "You're Mr. Stoddard Hampton, aren't you?"

"Guessed right, young lady."

"Then your subdivision's going right — right through our place, isn't it?"

Mr. Hampton rubbed his chin. "Guessed right again, but, see here! Suppose, in return for looking after this car — I forgot all about it — suppose I give you another lot — make the deed out in your name, and let your father move his house over."

"Next to ours!" cried his daughter suddenly. "So we can be chums. She asked me to eat lunch with them this noon, but I'd promised you not to leave the car."

"Oh, was that why —?" began Ethel. "I thought you just didn't want to." Then she added, "My father and mother'll be back soon, and we're going to have coquina broth. Won't you stay for supper, and let us thank you for — for —"

Mr. Hampton did not let her finish.

"I don't like thanks," he said, "so don't give me a large helping, but I'm very fond of coquina broth!"

Little Frances, aged five, came one day with her mother to see her grandmother. She wore a bright red sweater and blue leggings. "Well, are you for Harvard or Yale?" asked her grandmother. Standing very straight, with her head up, Frances replied, "I am a Unitarian."

—F. L. in *Christian Register*.

"Who was Shylock, Aunt Ethel?" "My dear! And you go to Sunday-school and don't know that!"—*Life*.

The Hepatica

By BEATRICE M. PARKER

THE little hepatica greets us among the first flowers of spring, sometimes when we think the sun is yet warm enough to awaken life plants. It is one of the most interesting flowers we shall find, although it is such a modest little bloom that few would guess that Mother Nature has a secret garden there.

If we were to look carefully at this plant, we should find that it differs from most of the spring flowers. When the leaves are falling from the trees, in the fall, the little hepatica sends out new leaves for the purpose of gathering sunshine and food for storage. Soon little flower buds are formed, to cuddle away in the very center of the plant and sleep all winter long. These buds are very

carefully wrapped with protecting leaves, and it is the new leaves that store the food needed for keeping this bud alive until the snows have gone. When the sun's first rays warm the ground, the little buds burst into bloom, far ahead of other plants, and they cheer us with their prophecy that winter is over and spring has indeed come.

Look further into the makeup of this plant and you will see that the stems and bracts are soft and downy, covered with leaf fur that gives additional warmth and protection. First the stems lift the buds and bend them gradually downward for protection against driving rain that would tear them. Then the coverings harden and make the plant sturdy. The flowers vary from white to lavender, and there is one interesting fact about them that escapes the eyes of many. When the flowers are new they

always close at night and on dark days, but as time goes along, they keep open longer and longer each day until, just before they fade and wither, they are open all day and all night. The more highly colored the blossoms are the more you note a fragrance, and as they lose their color the fragrance dies.

Since Yesterday

By ESTHER ANN CLARK

The lawns are green since yesterday;
The lilacs show their leaves;
And everywhere some hidden charm
Its subtle magic weaves.

The pussy willows down the bank
Are waking, sunshine kissed;
And all the sharp-etched winter trees
Are blurred with tassel mist.

The night has wrought a miracle,
A truly wondrous thing;
For yesterday was wintertime,
And now today is spring.



THE BOOKSHELF

Books suggested by Miss Elsie L. Lustig

Do you know CARROTS — Just a Little Boy — by Mr. Molesworth? A more lovable story was probably never written. It tells of the quaint childhood of Carrots and his sister Floss, their nursery days, their games on the beach, their visit to their kind auntie and little cousin Sybil, their wonderful plans and joys and disappointments and even some of the stories they had read aloud to them.

I know that lots of boys and girls have enjoyed the "David" books — DAVID GOES VOYAGING and DAVID GOES TO GREENLAND. Here is one which tells the record of a boy's daily life out in Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado, — DERIC IN MESA VERDE, by Deric Nusbaum. Deric has had a marvelous time excavating cliff-dwellers' ruins, hunting with Indians, and even finding mummies.

And now for a few more stories of real history. I do recommend ENGLISH OAK AND SPANISH GOLD, by Thomas A. H. Mawhinney, which is a tale of the days following the defeat of the Spanish Armada and of a lad of Devon who, with his uncle, journeys forth on the Spanish Main to seek fame and fortune. He has brave adventures, wins treasure and makes history. Lots of you have heard the names of Perry, Amundsen and other adventurous men who are still living and exploring. And I think you will enjoy reading more about them in LITTLE STORIES OF FAMOUS EXPLORERS, by Laura Antoinette Large.



THE CROW'S NEST

By
WAITSTILL
HASTINGS
SHARP

Text: Let us choose to us judgment: let us know among ourselves what is good.

—Job 34:4.

MY readers ought to know by this time that one of my hobbies is words. I mean that one of the habits which I get a lot of fun out of, and sometimes a real thrill, is catching a word out of my thought or someone's speech and thinking about it and seeing where it came from and what it means today. The reason that I mention this is in a paper which goes to church schools is because I always get a lot of good out of this hobby of mine. It has strengthened my religion.

Here's a thought. *No matter what may happen to us, as long as we are alive, we can think.* You can't play baseball in a church or in jail; you can't pack a player piano into your knapsack when you are off mountain climbing; you can't go roller skating very happily on cobblestones. But no matter what man or circumstance may do to us, as long as our hearts beat and our brains are in working order, we can think. We can think when we are threatened; we can think when we are in jail; we can think when we are told not to think; we can think when we are so injured or sick that we can't move a muscle; we can think when there is absolutely nothing else to do — which is why I wrote this second paragraph.

I want you to do more thinking. Don't

sit and twiddle your thumbs or chew gum while you wait for a train. Look back over something that has happened to you — like a generous act for someone else, or an ugly word that got away from you — and SEE WHAT IT MEANS.

Only the people who know what things mean can live strong lives and have strong religions. A leader is a man whom other people trust to tell them what things mean. It may be a mountain path, it may be the secret of radium, it may be world peace — the leader is trusted to show the way. He can lead because at some time before he stepped aside to think.

A word which we ought to think about is "mistake." What are its two parts? How do you suppose it started? Yes. It began as two words, "mis" and "take," which meant "wrong" and "take." That is, a mis-take is "a wrong take." When we make a mistake we make a *wrong* take — we choose the wrong thing. It is just as if we took a wrong trail in the deep woods. That would be a real mistake, wouldn't it?

Whenever we do anything it is just as if we stood at the crossroads. There is a chance of a mistake whenever we are doing anything, isn't there? Can you think of a single chance to act when there is not a chance for "a wrong take?" Of course all wrong choices aren't equally bad — all our mistakes don't hurt us or other people the same. But still, there is "a good" and "a bad" to everything we do. And of course everything we have ever done makes us what we are today.

So, taking the word mis-take very much in earnest will be no mistake. And taking it very much in earnest when we aren't up against a greater choice than to think or twiddle our thumbs is about the best way to get ready for the meaning of things and for taking the right trail in the deep woods.



THE BEACON CLUB

THE EDITOR'S POST BOX

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

HUDSON, MASS.

Dear Editor: I joined the Beacon Club last year and I'm so glad I did, as I enjoy *The Beacon* so much.

I am fifteen years old. I like to write letters so I should like to hear from someone. I have a sister Mildred, eighteen years old, who regrets to say she has never had a chance to join the Club, but she would like to know if any ex-Beaconers, or anyone eighteen or over, who reads *The Beacon*, would write to her.

Yours sincerely,
DOROTHEA HARDING.

147-03 NORTHERN BOULEVARD,
FLUSHING, L. I., NEW YORK.

Dear Editor: May I join the Beacon Club? I am a member of the Unitarian Sunday school. My teacher's name is Mrs. Fairley, whom I like very much. I am a collector of stamps and study geography and history. I should like to exchange stamps with other girls and boys.

Yours cordially,
AURIE MORGNER.

R.F.D. 8,
SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

Dear Editor: I am a member of the Beacon Club and go to the Unitarian Church. There are eight members in our class, all of whom would like to join the Club. I am trying to interest them in our church. I received a mysterious letter from a girl in the Beacon Club and we have become real good friends.

Very truly yours,
HELEN HIXSON.

641 MARKET DRIVE,
PORTLAND, ORE.

Dear Editor: I should love to belong to the Beacon Club and wear a Club button. Every Sunday I get *The Beacon*. I like it very much. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school in Portland. My teacher's name is Mrs. Miller. I should like some other girl to write to me.

Sincerely yours,
JEANNETTE JONES.

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.
OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.
OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

276 LEXINGTON ST.,
EAST BOSTON, MASS.

Dear Editor: I have a stamp collection of 750 stamps. I have stamps from every European and Asian country, from Africa, Central, South and North America, Australia and Iceland. It is a very interesting hobby and it helps you in school, in geography and history, — at least, I have found it so. The oldest stamp I have is a yellowish brown, United States three-cent stamp with Washington's head on it. I have 105 American stamps. I have an envelope that went through the air on the first trip by Air-Mail from Boston to Chicago. It has stamps and printing all over it, saying — "First flight inaugurating contract air mail. Boston — New York Route."

I should be very glad to correspond with a stamp collector and would be very glad to give him the name and address of a stamp dealer. I should like to trade stamps with other collectors, also.

Respectfully yours,
RICHARD E. SCHULTES.

5 AGASSIZ PARK,
JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS.

Dear Editor: I should like to join the Beacon Club. I am eight years old. I go to the Unitarian Sunday School. I get *The Beacon* every Sunday. My teacher's name is Mrs. Davis. I am in the fourth class. I should like to wear the Beacon Club pin. I go to Miss Lee's school, 107 Marlboro St., Boston, Mass. I wish some girl of my age would write to me.

Yours truly,
CONSTANCE HALL.

Other new members of our Club in Massachusetts are Dorothy Valentine, Chartley; Elinor Percy, Chestnut Hill; Jane Capen, Dedham; Mary F. Smart and Helen Payne, Greenfield; Jocelyn Mair, Medfield; Lillian David, Northbridge; Harold S. Barnes, Petersham; Bernice Younie, Quincy; Madeline and Pearl Hartwell, Uxbridge; Robert Higgins, Winchester; Betty Morse, Worcester.

PUZZLERS

Watch Charades

1

My *First* is one of twenty-four,
Each day has neither less nor more.

My *Next* is given to be taken,
We give my *Second* to be shaken.

My *Whole* revolves from left to right
It shows the time of day and night.

2

If to my *First* is added E,
My *First* a northern state will be.

My *Next* is part of every year,
Or water flowing cold and clear.

Without my *Whole*, as we well know
The best of watches will not go.

CHARLES NEVERS HOLMES

King's Move

By going up, down, or diagonally, in any direction, you can find the names of nine evergreen trees.)

F I C H J
R T D E U
M A K M N
U R C I L
C E P O B
W D S A S
O O M L T

—The Target

Answer to Puzzle in No. 20

Enigma.—Washington is the mightiest name on earth.

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